

Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached replacement drawing sheets make changes to Figs. 1-4 and replace the original sheets with Figs. 1-4.

Attachment: Replacement Sheets (4)

REMARKS

Claims 1-43 are pending. Claims 1, 2, 5, 9, 17 and 18 are amended and claims 20-43 are added. The amendment to claim 4 is solely to correct a typographical error and has not bearing on patentability. Further, the specification has been amended to correct minor informalities as is the case with Figs. 1-4. Figs. 1-4 are also corrected to show that the output of the engine does not connect directly to the output to the transmission. This correction is in keeping with what is shown in the priority document which was incorporated by reference and, thus, does not constitute new matter.

In paragraph 4, on page 2 of the Office Action, and in paragraph 5, on page 3 of the Office Action, the Abstract and specification were objected to for a number of reasons. Attached hereto is an amended Abstract responsive to the objection thereto. Further, the specification, in particular paragraphs [0010], [0011] and [0028], have been amended responsive to the objection. Further, in response to paragraphs 5A)3) and 4), Fig. 1 has been revised to show the necessary referenced elements. Further, paragraph [0048] has been amended to remove the double recitation of reference no. 20. Lastly, in addition to the corrections to Fig. 1 discussed above, Figs. 1-4 have all been corrected to properly reflect the air gap between the rotor and the stator of the second electric motor.

In paragraph 6, on page 4 of the Office Action, claim 17 was objected to. Claim 17 has been amended responsive to the objection.

In paragraph 8, on page 4 of the Office Action, claims 9-13, 18 and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Specific language was identified in claims 9 and 18 as forming the basis for the rejection. Both claims have been amended responsive to the rejection. Based on these amendments, in combination with what is described in paragraphs [0010] and [0011], it is submitted the claims are clear and readily understood by one skilled in the art.

In paragraph 16, on page 10 of the Office Action, it was indicated that claims 9-13 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, and in paragraph 17, on page 11 of the Office Action, it was indicated that claims 14 and 15 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the features of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants submit that claims 9-13 are now allowable as the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, has been overcome. Further, Applicants submit that claim 1, the claim from which all of the allowable claims depend, is allowable for the reasons discussed below.

In paragraph 10, on page 6 of the Office Action, claims 1, 16 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Kashiwase, U.S. Patent No. 6,146,302; and in paragraph 11, claims 1, 16 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(a) as being anticipated by German Patent No. 201 17 410. The rejections are respectfully traversed.

Applicants' claim 1 calls for a hybrid drive system which transmits output from an internal combustion engine to an output portion and inputs output from a second electric motor to the output portion, the hybrid drive system comprising a first electric motor; a power distribution planetary gear, the power distribution planetary gear having a first rotation element to which output from the internal combustion engine is transmitted, a second rotation element that is operatively linked with the first motor, and a third rotation element that is operatively linked with the output portion; and a plurality of speed steps transmission interposed between the second electric motor and the output portion, wherein a drive power from the second electric motor is adjusted through the plurality of speed steps transmission to assist a drive power distributed from the internal combustion engine through the power distribution planetary gear. Neither of the applied references disclose such.

Kashiwase, in the applied Fig. 17, discloses combining the power of an engine 1 and a motor 2 at a planetary gear 3. The combined input of these two power sources is then output to

a second motor which adds additional power before transmission to a continuously variable transmission 5. This is clearly shown in the applied Fig. 17 and described in col. 8, lines 36-45 of Kashiwase. Thus, Kashiwase uses two electric motors and the engine to provide the output power. Applicants' invention, on the other hand, has a second electric motor that is adjusted through a plurality of speed steps to assist the drive power that has been distributed from an internal combustion engine through a power distribution planetary gear. As such, Kashiwase does not literally disclose the claimed invention. Further, Kashiwase does not suggest the claimed invention for the reasons discussed. Further, because Kashiwase discloses a continuously variable transmission, it is difficult to argue that the transmission itself is arranged axially as the output portion of the transmission is not on the same axis as the input portion. Thus, Kashiwase does not literally disclose the subject matter of claim 17. Further, Kashiwase does not disclose the subject matter of claim 16 for all the reasons discussed with respect to claim 1 and for the additional features recited therein. As such, it is respectfully requested the rejection be withdrawn.

As to the rejection over the German patent, it shows the same basic structure, in the applied Fig. 1, as does Kashiwase. That is, the first motor 3 and the engine are additive in the planetary gear unit 12. The output then of the second electric motor 4 is added to the previous additive output to produce the final output. As such, the German patent cannot anticipate, or suggest, Applicants' invention of claims 1, 16, and 17. Lastly, the German reference amplifies a drive power of the motor using reduction gears and transmits the amplified drive power to an output shaft. Thus, it differs from Applicants' claimed invention. Thus, it is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

In paragraph 13, on page 7 of the Office Action, claims 18 and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kashiwase in view of Frank, U.S. Patent No. 5,842,534; in paragraph 14, on page 8, claims 2-5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as

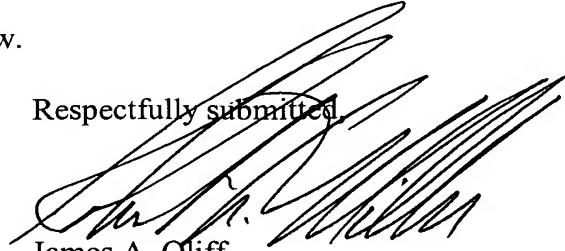
being unpatentable over Kashiwase in view of Frank; and in paragraph 5, claims 6-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kashiwase and Frank and further in view of Hayabuchi et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,558,287 (Hayabuchi). The rejections are respectfully traversed.

Frank also combines the power of an internal combustion engine and an electric motor before input into a multispeed transmission. Because it operates in the same manner as does Kashiwase, even if one substitutes the multispeed transmission for the continuously variable transmission, the combination does not suggest the subject matter of Applicants' claim 1 and thus cannot suggest the subject matter of any of the other rejected claims for all those reasons as well as for the additional features recited therein. As to Hayabuchi, it deals with a standard transmission associated with an internal combustion engine. As such, there would be no reason to combine it into a hybrid system. Thus, adding Hayabuchi to Kashiwase and Frank again does not overcome the deficiencies of the references with respect to claim 1 and thus cannot suggest the subject matter of claims 6-8 for all those reasons as well as for the additional features recited therein. Thus, it is respectfully requested the rejection be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-43 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



James A. Oliff
Registration No. 27,075

Robert A. Miller
Registration No. 32,771

JAO:RAM/eks

Attachments:

Petition for Extension of Time
Amendment Transmittal
Replacement Sheets

Date: December 6, 2005

OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC
P.O. Box 19928
Alexandria, Virginia 22320
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

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